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General and complete disarmament

Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures

Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report describes activities undertaken by States, including members of the Group of Interested States in Practical Disarmament Measures, and regional and subregional organizations to consolidate peace through practical disarmament measures.

It also summarizes the activities undertaken at the national, subregional and regional levels by the United Nations, States and organizations in a position to do so, to provide assistance to States in their efforts to curb the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and collecting and disposing of them.

In addition, it provides an overview of the implementation by the United Nations and by States of General Assembly resolution 60/81 of 8 December 2005 on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

The present report covers the period from July 2005 to July 2006, except for the section on the consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures, which covers the period from July 2004 to July 2006.

* A/61/150.

** The document was submitted late to the conference services without the explanation required under paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 53/208 B, by which the Assembly decided that, if a report is submitted late, the reason should be included in a footnote to the document.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 59/82 of 3 December 2004 on the consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit at its sixty-first session a report on the implementation of practical disarmament measures, taking into consideration the activities of the Group of Interested States in Practical Disarmament Measures in that regard. By its resolution 60/71 of 8 December 2005 on assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them, the Assembly invited the Secretary-General and those States and organizations in a position to do so to provide assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them. By the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to consider the matter and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session.

2. By its resolution 60/81 of 8 December 2005 on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to collate and circulate data and information provided by States on a voluntary basis, including national reports, on their implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, and encouraged Member States to submit such reports. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its sixty-first session on the implementation of that resolution. The present report is submitted pursuant to the requests contained in the above-mentioned resolutions.

II. Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures

3. During the period under review (July 2004 to July 2006), the Group of Interested States in Practical Disarmament Measures considered and provided financial support to a number of project proposals submitted by the Department for Disarmament Affairs, its Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and non-governmental organizations. The proposals included a fact-finding mission undertaken jointly by the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Bureau to Burundi in February 2005, undertaken in response to a request of the Government of Burundi for assistance in addressing the problem of civilian possession of small arms and light weapons; and the Regional Symposium on the Implementation by Arab States of the Programme of Action, held in Algiers from 11 to 13 April 2005. Following the presentation by the Nairobi-based Africa Peace Forum to the Group of Interested States of a project entitled "Implementation of small arms and light weapons control measures in South Sudan", the Government of Germany decided to provide funding for the project, which is currently being implemented by the Bonn International Centre for Conversion.

4. During the period under review, a contribution to the Trust Fund for the Consolidation of Peace through Practical Disarmament Measures was made by the Czech Republic.

5. At its meeting in April 2005, the Group of Interested States decided to change its working methods to focus not only on the consideration of project proposals but also on the discussion of thematic issues relating to the problem of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, such as its impact on humanitarian assistance, human security and development, as well as on the consideration and development of best practices in dealing with those issues. The Group also decided to institute a system for rotating the Chairmanship of its meetings, which had previously been chaired by Germany as the main convener of the Group. It also decided to invite, to its regular meetings, representatives of major civil society and non-governmental organizations actively involved in the fight against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

III. Assistance to States

6. During the period from July 2005 to July 2006, the Department for Disarmament Affairs received requests for assistance from Bolivia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. The assistance requested included technical assistance for preparing national reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action, registration of firearms; the analysis of legal frameworks for firearms, ammunition and explosives; the elaboration of regulatory laws in the areas of firearms and ammunition stockpile management; capacity-building for law enforcement officials in the marking and tracing of firearms, ammunition and explosives; and the creation of databases on firearms. The Regional Centre in Lima responded to the requests and provided assistance (see A/61/157).

7. The Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs have continued to provide assistance to the Sri Lanka National Commission against the Proliferation of Illicit Small Arms through a joint project launched in 2003 with the financial support of the Government of Japan. In that connection, from 15 to 18 February 2006, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs undertook a technical mission to Colombo, at the request of the Government of Sri Lanka, to discuss the activities of the Commission, which was reappointed by the newly elected President of Sri Lanka. The Commission, within the framework of the project, carried out a pilot survey on the situation of small arms and light weapons in the Hambantota district, which was completed in June 2006. The survey is expected to serve as a basis for a nationwide survey and for the development of a national action plan to curb the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons.

IV. Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

A. United Nations system

General Assembly

International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons

8. By its decision 60/519 of 8 December 2005, the General Assembly adopted the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and

Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, annexed to the report of the Open-ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (A/60/88 and Corr.1 and 2).

Illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons

9. Pursuant to paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 60/81 of 8 December 2005, the Secretary-General established the Group of Governmental Experts to consider further steps to enhance international cooperation in preventing, combating and eradicating illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons. The first session of the Group will be held in Geneva from 27 November to 1 December 2006, while the second and third sessions will be held in New York from 19 to 23 March 2007 and from 4 to 8 June 2007, respectively. The Secretary-General will submit the report of the Group to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session.

Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

10. By paragraphs 1 and 2 of its resolution 59/86 of 3 December 2004, the General Assembly decided to convene the United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, in New York from 26 June to 7 July 2006, and a session of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference, also in New York, from 9 to 20 January 2006.

11. The Preparatory Committee, which was chaired by Ambassador Sylvester Rowe of Sierra Leone, held 15 formal meetings and 5 informal meetings that included a general debate, statements by representatives of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and an interactive thematic debate, which focused on six clusters: the human/humanitarian, socio-economic and other dimensions; norms, regulations and administrative procedures; the excessive accumulation, misuse and uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons; international cooperation and assistance; communication; and follow-up and reporting mechanisms. While a number of elements emerging from the thematic debate were suggested for possible inclusion in a draft final outcome document of the Review Conference, it was apparent from consultations conducted by the Chair that no agreement could be reached on substantive issues. The Committee did, however, reach an agreement on procedural issues for the Conference, including the agenda and the draft rules of procedure, and unanimously endorsed the candidacy of Ambassador Prasad Kariyawasam of Sri Lanka for the presidency of the Conference. Furthermore, the Committee requested the President-designate to undertake the necessary consultations and handle technical and other organizational matters in the period before the Conference. Subsequently, five informal meetings were convened by the President-designate from March to May 2006 (see A/CONF.192/2006/RC/1).

United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

12. The Review Conference was convened in New York from 26 June to 7 July 2006. The Conference comprised three parts, namely, a high-level segment with a general exchange of views; a thematic exchange of views on progress and problems in the implementation of the Programme of Action, with specific emphasis on international cooperation and assistance and best practices of small arms and light weapons projects; and consideration of the draft final outcome document. More than 110 senior officials, including some at the ministerial level, participated in the high-level segment. In addition, the Conference heard statements by representatives of international and regional organizations and a wide spectrum of civil society organizations.

13. The main objective of the Conference was to assess the progress made in the implementation of the commitments made under the Programme of Action. Member States acknowledged that progress had been made at the national, regional and global levels, but more needed to be done to address the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects and to fully implement the Programme of Action. Furthermore, the Conference discussed some of the issues on which agreement had not been reached during the 2001 United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, namely civilian possession of weapons, the question of ammunition, and the transfer of weapons to non-State actors. There were extensive discussions on the issue of transfer controls and global follow-up mechanisms. A large number of States called for the full and effective implementation of the Instrument. However, owing to the persistence of diverging views on a number of issues, participating States could not agree on a final outcome document for the Conference, which consequently did not provide any guidance for a global follow-up mechanism for future reviews of progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action. Nevertheless, the States participating in the Conference overwhelmingly reaffirmed their strong commitment to the full implementation of the Programme of Action and unanimously adopted the procedural report (A/CONF.192/2006/RC/9).

Security Council

14. On 20 March 2006, the Security Council held an open debate on the issue of small arms (see S/PV.5390) to consider the report of the Secretary-General on small arms (S/2006/109), submitted pursuant to the request made by the President of the Security Council in his statement of 17 February 2005 (S/PRST/2007/7). The report focused on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the first report of the Secretary-General on small arms (S/2002/1053), which addressed ways and means in which the Security Council could contribute to dealing with the question of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in situations under its consideration. Those recommendations covered four main topics: implementation of the Programme of Action; actions and arms embargoes mandated by the Security Council; conflict prevention, peacebuilding and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants; and confidence-building measures.

Coordinating Action on Small Arms

15. During the period under review, a number of joint activities were carried out under the framework of the Coordinating Action on Small Arms mechanism.[1] At a meeting on 21 December 2005, the principals of the participating United Nations entities reaffirmed their commitment to the mechanism, adopted its strategic framework and endorsed its database project. The project, which is funded by the Governments of Japan and Sweden, was developed by the Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean in cooperation with the Small Arms and Demobilization Unit of the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). The main objective of the database is to facilitate coordination and the collation and circulation of information among Member States, members of the mechanism and the general public.[2]

16. The Regional Centre, in its capacity as the regional focal point of the mechanism for Latin America and the Caribbean, organized several meetings at the national and subregional levels, with the aim of enhancing the functioning of the mechanism, increasing awareness, and identifying potential activities for cooperation to be undertaken by members.

17. The Small Arms and Demobilization Unit, in collaboration with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, UNIDIR and the Small Arms Survey, within the framework of the joint project "Capacity-building for reporting to the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms", has continued to assist Member States in their preparation of national reports, by undertaking technical missions, organizing regional seminars and providing a help desk.

18. The Department for Disarmament Affairs, in collaboration with the Small Arms and Demobilization Unit, organized a capacity-building workshop for members of selected national coordinating bodies on small arms and light weapons, at Headquarters in New York, on 22 and 23 June 2006. The main objectives of the workshop were to build the capacity of national coordinating bodies in implementing the Programme of Action; to prepare their representatives to participate actively in the work of the Review Conference; and to familiarize them with United Nations procedures for meetings and issues of major concern in the international debate on small arms and light weapons. The workshop, which was funded by the Government of Canada, was held in conjunction with a pilot sponsorship programme developed by the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Small Arms and Demobilization Unit, with funding from the Governments of the

[1] The Coordinating Action on Small Arms mechanism was established by the Secretary-General in 1998 to enable the Organization to bring a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to bear on a complex and multifaceted global problem. It has 16 United Nations entities as members: the Department for Disarmament Affairs, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Public Information, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme.

[2] See www.un-casa.org.

Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The programme was aimed at facilitating the participation of 30 members of national coordinating bodies from developing countries selected on the basis of a set of criteria agreed upon by the donors of the pilot programme.

19. In another joint initiative within the framework of the Coordinating Action on Small Arms, the Department for Disarmament Affairs, UNIDIR and the Small Arms Survey are currently finalizing a comparative study of existing regional and subregional instruments on small arms and light weapons brokering. It is expected that the study will constitute a valuable background document for the Group of Governmental Experts to consider further steps to enhance international cooperation in preventing, combating and eradicating illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons.

20. Furthermore, in connection with the Review Conference, the Department of Public Information, in close collaboration with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, developed a comprehensive communication strategy aimed at utilizing various television, radio, print, outreach and Internet channels of the Department of Public Information, as well as the network of the United Nations Information Centres and Services, to draw the attention of the international community to the dangers associated with the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and to raise awareness among the international general public of the progress made by the United Nations and its Member States in the implementation of the Programme of Action. The Department of Public Information, in collaboration with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, also designed and developed the official poster and website of the Conference, as well as a press kit and other information tools. The Department of Public Information also helped to develop a public service announcement with Messenger of Peace, Michael Douglas, on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.[3]

Department for Disarmament Affairs

21. The Department for Disarmament Affairs continued to collate and circulate data and information provided by States on a voluntary basis, including national reports, on the implementation of the Programme of Action, national legislation on small arms and light weapons and national points of contact for the implementation of the Programme. The information received is posted on the Department's website.[4]

22. The Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific of the Department for Disarmament Affairs organized a workshop on small arms and light weapons for South and South-East Asia entitled "Towards the Review Conference on the implementation of the Programme of Action", in Bangkok from 17 to 19 May 2006. The workshop was co-sponsored by the Governments of Canada and Japan and UNDP. The main objective of the workshop was to assist South and South-East Asian States in their preparations for the Conference, to identify specific problems related to small arms and light weapons in the region and to encourage regional cooperation in the implementation of the Programme of Action. Approximately 80 participants, including Government representatives, mostly from South and

[3] http://www.un.org/events/smallarms2006.

[4] http://disarmament.un.org/cab/salw.html. The Department also maintains printed versions of the documents, which are available for consultation by Member States.

South-East Asia, and experts from research institutes, international and regional organizations and non-governmental organizations, attended the workshop. Two working groups were organized, focusing on South Asia and South-East Asia, respectively. The reports of the working groups were transmitted to the Conference.

United Nations Children's Fund

23. During the period under review, UNICEF undertook advocacy and programme implementation in 19 countries for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of children associated with fighting forces. UNICEF also participated in the development of United Nations integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards, which include important recommendations to ensure that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes recognize the specific needs of women and children, and capitalize on and promote grass-roots peacebuilding and disarmament initiatives for women and the young. UNICEF is also leading a global effort to review and revive the Cape Town Principles on the Prevention of Recruitment of Children into the Armed Forces and Demobilization and Social Reintegration of Child Soldiers in Africa. In 2005 and 2006, UNICEF supported landmine risk education in 29 countries and is expanding its small arms awareness and advocacy activities. UNICEF has also continued its participation with partners in the landmark United Nations study on violence against children. The study, to be launched in October 2006, will provide a detailed global picture of the nature, extent and causes of violence against children and young people and will also propose clear recommendations for action to prevent and reduce such violence. As called for by the Security Council in resolution 1612 (2005), UNICEF is contributing to the implementation of the monitoring and reporting mechanism on violations perpetrated against children in conflict-affected areas.

United Nations Development Programme

24. In 2005 and 2006, the Small Arms and Demobilization Unit of the United Nations Development Programme developed broader and more comprehensive programmes to reduce the availability of weapons as part of an overall armed violence reduction or post-conflict recovery strategy. UNDP provided support to national programmes in over 30 countries as well as regional small arms initiatives in Central America, South-East Europe, the Great Lakes region and West Africa. It also continued to support weapons and ammunition collection, stockpile management and destruction. As a result, 102,652 small arms and light weapons as well as the equivalent of 13 million small arms cartridges (bullets) were destroyed.

25. On 7 June 2006, the Government of Switzerland and UNDP hosted a ministerial summit on armed violence and development in Geneva. The States participating in the summit adopted the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development committing them to increasing resources allocated to addressing the issue of armed violence.[5] The Small Arms and Demobilization Unit, in partnership with the Government of Switzerland, will work with countries to promote and implement the principles embodied in the Declaration. They include the strengthening of methodologies aimed at measuring the costs of armed violence so as to facilitate the identification and design of concrete initiatives. In addition, the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation

[5] http://content.undp.org/go/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset_id=508002.

and Development agreed to include the issue of armed violence and development in its 2007-2008 work programme. In that context, UNDP, in partnership with the British Department for International Development and others, will help to identify the modalities and means of implementing the new mandate.

Department of Public Information

26. During the reporting period, the Department of Public Information helped to distribute news reports, in English and French, on small arms and light weapons-related issues worldwide to over 43,500 subscribers through the e-mail service of the United Nations News Centre. It also covered various related issues in its daily live radio broadcasts and current affairs magazines, including: "Death by firearms in Brazil"; "An interview with a Brazilian non-governmental organization director on disarmament in Brazil"; "The positions of Arab non-governmental organizations on small arms"; and "Small arms issues in Syria, Yemen and Qatar". The Department produced a *UN in Action* television news story on small arms and light weapons called "Surviving rebel abduction in Uganda". A number of related stories were also broadcast by UNIFEED, the daily satellite feed which reaches some 560 television stations around the world through the Associated Press Television News agency.

United Nations Development Fund for Women

27. From 31 October to 2 November 2005, the secretariat of the Multi-country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme of the World Bank and the United Nations Development Fund for Women co-organized a consultation workshop in Kigali, aimed at strengthening Programme-supported activities in the region.[6] The workshop was attended by delegations from the national programmes of the seven actively participating countries, representatives of non-governmental organizations from Angola, Burundi and Rwanda, and representatives of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Operation in Burundi, UNDP and UNICEF.

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

28. The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research is undertaking a study to examine the prospects of a regional strategy for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to address cross-border transfers of small arms, light weapons, their parts and ammunition in West Africa. The Institute is also initiating a project to provide international assistance for implementing the Programme of Action, in response to the requests made by the Chair of the 2005 Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Programme of Action, as well as Member States and international organizations at the meeting of the Preparatory Committee in January 2006. The aim of the project is to map out the degree of technical and financial assistance currently being allocated to help States implement the Programme of Action and to identify the main providers and recipients of assistance to support activities in the area of small arms and light weapons.

[6] The Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme is a multiagency effort that supports the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants in the greater Great Lakes region of Central Africa. The largest programme of its kind in the world, it currently targets an estimated 450,000 ex-combatants in seven countries: Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda.

29. The Institute, in partnership with the South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Centre for International Cooperation and Security conducted a study to identify the actual costs of storage and security for small arms and ammunition and to develop a model to assist Governments in the formulation of policies for the control of small arms and light weapons. At the request of the European Parliament and the European Commission, UNIDIR is also undertaking a project aimed at mapping and analysing global and European Union activities and programmes relating to small arms and light weapons and explosive remnants of war. In addition, UNIDIR is initiating a project entitled "Disarmament as humanitarian action: making multilateral negotiations work", which aims at reframing multilateral disarmament negotiation processes in humanitarian terms with a view to developing practical proposals to apply humanitarian concepts that could help negotiators. Furthermore, UNIDIR and UNDP Sierra Leone have collaborated on a joint study offering an overview of the post-conflict disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, the origins of the UNDP arms for development project and the findings of the survey at the national and district levels.

Department of Peacekeeping Operations

30. During the reporting period, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations continued to play an important role in the implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, Liberia and the Sudan. The provisions for weapons collection and destruction in the programmes are part of a formal disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and, in some cases, also part of the efforts to curb the illegal possession of weapons through collection strategies at the community level. The strategies are complemented by support for the development of control regimes for small arms and light weapons and of the capacity of national Governments to deal with the proliferation of such weapons. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities are undertaken within a regional context, which emphasizes the monitoring and curbing of the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons and the monitoring of arms embargoes. The peacekeeping missions also provide support to the work of the panels of experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and the Sudan, which have been tasked to monitor arms embargoes. In addition, the Department is leading a joint United Nations inter-agency initiative to develop comprehensive and coherent United Nations policies, guidelines and procedures on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration through the United Nations integrated disarmament demobilization and reintegration standards, a process that is expected to be launched in the third quarter of 2006, as well as a web-based United Nations resource centre on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

31. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the resulting militarization of settlements have a grave impact on the security of refugees and internally displaced persons and those who seek to assist them. During the reporting period, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) formalized its partnership with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on several issues, including small arms and mine action. UNHCR

continued to work closely with the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to develop and strengthen protection-related small arms issues, particularly within the context of the new cluster approach, for which UNHCR has the lead in both protection and camp coordination/camp management for internally displaced persons in conflict-generated emergencies. Examples of ongoing efforts can be seen in Burundi, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan (Darfur) and the United Republic of Tanzania. Strategic and operational-level interaction with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations includes the exchange of staff and participation in the integrated mission planning process. UNHCR will endeavour to provide, where feasible, operational assistance in countries of concern in areas such as camp security and the separation and disarmament of combatants.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

32. Following the entry into force, on 3 July 2005, of the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the activities of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime are now geared towards the goals of achieving the universal ratification of and full compliance with the Protocol. A substantive review of the implementation of the Protocol will be conducted at the third session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols, to be held in Vienna from 9 to 18 October 2006. The Conference will consider, inter alia, the adaptation of national legislation, the enhancement of international cooperation and the development of technical assistance to overcome difficulties in implementing the Protocol.

33. On 9 and 10 March 2006, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime participated in the meeting of independent experts and stakeholders to review the draft ECOWAS convention on small arms and light weapons, their ammunition and other related materials, held in Abuja, and provided substantive contributions to the elaboration of the convention.

B. Activities undertaken at the regional and subregional levels

34. During the period under review, regional and subregional organizations continued to play an active role in implementing the Programme of Action. Some of the initiatives undertaken in various regions and subregions are described below.

Africa

35. The second Continental Conference of African Governmental Experts and Regional Economic Communities on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons met in Windhoek, from 14 to 16 December 2005. The Conference, organized by the African Union and hosted by the Government of Namibia, was convened to review the progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action and to develop an African common position on small arms and light weapons issues. The Conference also requested all Member States to actively promote and defend that position in the relevant discussions and negotiations. The common position reached at the Conference reaffirmed the Bamako Declaration on an

African Common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons of December 2000, and was endorsed by African Ministers for Foreign Affairs at their meeting in Khartoum, in January 2006. The common position was issued as an official document of the Review Conference.

36. Signatories to the Nairobi Declaration on the Problem of the Proliferation of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa and the Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa approved and adopted the best practices guidelines and minimum common standards on key issues in the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol. The Protocol, which entered into force in May 2006, is a detailed, legally binding regional agreement that builds upon the commitments of the politically binding Nairobi Declaration, which was signed in March 2000. It commits States to establishing controls across a wide range of areas, including civilian possession (which is not covered in the Programme of Action), transfers of small arms and light weapons, manufacturing, marking and tracing, brokering, and enforcement of arms embargoes.

37. On 5 and 6 September 2005, the Regional Centre for Small Arms[7] hosted a round-table workshop on the enhancement of regional cooperation and coordination in the management of the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons in Africa. The objectives of the round table were to deepen and strengthen partnerships among participating stakeholders; to facilitate cooperation and coordination in combating illicit small arms and light weapons; and to share experiences and lessons learned in the implementation of the Programme of Action.[8]

38. On 22 and 23 September 2005, the Centre also convened and hosted a workshop in Nairobi on the harmonization of legislation of firearms in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa. The workshop aimed to develop guidelines on outstanding issues of small arms control and to reach a common understanding of the requirements for the harmonization of legislation consistent with the Nairobi Protocol.

39. On 8 and 9 December 2005, the Centre, in conjunction with the Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa, the Great Lakes Parliamentary Forum on Peace and Saferworld, convened a regional parliamentary workshop on the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol for the prevention, control and reduction of small arms and light weapons in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa. The Members of Parliament at the workshop agreed to strengthen the link between parliamentarians and law enforcement agencies; to lobby for the creation of small arms resource centres in parliament libraries; to build the capacity of parliamentarians in policymaking on peacebuilding issues; and to commit themselves to the harmonization of legislation on small arms and light weapons in the region.

40. The Centre also hosted the third annual Subregional Civil Society/National Focal Points Dialogue Forum from 14 to 16 February 2006 in Nairobi. The main goals of the Forum were the promotion of experience-sharing among national focal points and civil society and undertaking an assessment of the progress and

[7] The Regional Centre for Small Arms is a fully recognized subregional body with an independent legal status and a legal mandate to coordinate action by Member States on small arms control.

[8] See www.smallarmsnet.org/workshops/regarmswshopsep05.pdf.

challenges in the implementation of the Nairobi Declaration and the Nairobi Protocol.

41. The Economic Community of West African States held three meetings of experts in March, May and June 2006, to consider the draft ECOWAS convention on small arms and light weapons, their ammunition and other related materials, which would replace the ECOWAS Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Small Arms and Light Weapons in West Africa, adopted in October 1998. On 14 June 2006, the Heads of State and Government of the States members of ECOWAS signed the convention at their ordinary summit, in Abuja. Under the convention, ECOWAS may, inter alia, impose sanctions on States parties if they fail to comply with the restrictions on the manufacturing, importation and exportation of small arms and light weapons set out in the Convention. It prohibits all international transfers of small arms and light weapons, except when authorized by the ECOWAS secretariat, in order to meet legitimate defence or security needs, or for peacekeeping missions. It also specifically bans transfers of weapons to non-State actors.

42. On 20 and 21 September 2005, in Kigali, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), in partnership with the Institute for Security Studies and SaferRwanda, organized a workshop to review the progress made by ECCAS member States in the implementation of the Programme of Action. The member States agreed on several recommendations at the workshop, including recommendations to encourage the voluntarily surrender of weapons through programmes of temporary amnesty; to explore joint police operations for bordering countries; to include civil society and national focal points in disarmament programmes; to support disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and awareness-raising programmes; and to encourage the establishment of national focal points where there are none.[9]

Asia and the Pacific

43. On 29 November 2005, an extensive work programme to implement the Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime was adopted at the fifth Ministerial Meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on Transnational Crime in Hanoi. Arms smuggling in South-East Asia was one of the issues addressed in that work programme.[10]

Europe

44. On 15 June 2006, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on small arms and light weapons with a view to contributing to the Review Conference. In its resolution, the European Parliament, inter alia, called upon States to agree to a set of global principles on arms transfers, including a requirement not to transfer weapons that are likely to contribute to human rights violations or crimes against humanity or that foster regional or national instability and armed conflict. In the resolution, the international community is urged to start negotiations on an international arms trade treaty, within the United Nations and directly after the Review Conference.[11]

[9] www.iss.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity_to_union/pdfs/eccas/rptwshopsep05.pdf.

[10] See www.aseansec.org/17937.htm.

[11] See www.europarl.europa.eu.

45. A new European strategy on small arms and light weapons and their ammunition was adopted in December 2005. The strategy identifies the regions worst affected by the impact of internal and cross-border conflicts aggravated by the destabilizing influx of small arms and light weapons. The European Union expressed its readiness to provide support, both financial and technical, to Governments, non-governmental organizations, regional organizations and arrangements engaged in the fight against the trafficking and misuse of small arms and light weapons and in the elimination of dangerous small arms stockpiles.[12]

46. The Forum for Security Cooperation of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) held a seminar in Lithuania, in November 2005, on explosive remnants of war.[13] The event was a follow-up to a seminar on advancing the Ottawa Convention in Northern and Eastern Europe, which was held in Vilnius in 2004. The primary aim of the seminar was to keep the momentum for the process of ratification and preparation for the successful implementation of Protocol V, on Explosive Remnants of War, to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.

47. The Organization also hosted a workshop in Zagreb, on 27 March 2006, on controlling the sale and export of small arms and light weapons in South-Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. The workshop brought together experts from various OSCE countries as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in order to assess and discuss existing legislative frameworks that regulate the transfers of small arms and light weapons.[14]

48. At its 479th plenary meeting in March 2006, the OSCE Forum decided to attach to its handbook of best practices on small arms and light weapons an annex entitled "Concerning the National Procedures for Stockpile Management and Security of Man-Portable Air Defence Systems".

49. In February 2006 in Belgrade, the South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, the European Union and the Export Control and Border Security programme of the United States Department of State, held a joint seminar on annual arms export reporting, with the aim of developing a standardized reporting framework in compliance with the European Union code of conduct for arms export.

50. In May 2006, the Regional Implementation Plan for Combating the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe was updated. The Plan, which was adopted in November 2001, involves South-Eastern European Governments in priority-setting and decision-making in region-wide efforts to tackle the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons. In addition, the South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Small Arms and Light Weapons Monitor of the South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons is a major ongoing project that produces an annual report containing an overview of the progress made by each country within the region towards fulfilling its commitments in combating the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons.

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[12] http://europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article_5546_en.htm.

[13] See http://www.osce.org/documents/fsc/2005/11/17144_en.pdf.

[14] See www.osce.org/fsc/item_1_18519.html.

Latin America and the Caribbean

51. In November 2005, in Washington, D.C., States members of the Organization of American States (OAS) convened a meeting of national authorities on the import and export of firearms, to review compliance by countries with the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials, and to discuss its full and more effective implementation. In February 2006, the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission of OAS also convened a meeting to adopt model legislation on firearms marking with a view to facilitating countries' efforts in the implementation of the Convention. To date, 26 of the 34 OAS member States have ratified the Convention and a number of them have revised their legislation to be in full compliance with it.

52. The Central American Small Arms Control project, a regional initiative of the general secretariat of the Central American Integration System, is now being implemented. Its objectives are to contribute to the elimination of illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons in Central America, with a view to reducing armed violence and strengthening conditions for security, stability and development. The first achievement of the project was the adoption, in December 2005, of a politically binding code of conduct on transfers in small arms, ammunition, explosives and other related materials among Central American countries. The code of conduct prohibits arms transfers to States that commit or condone violations of human rights or incur serious breaches of international humanitarian law.[15]

53. At its seventeenth intersessional meeting, in February 2006, the Task Force on Crime and Security of the Caribbean Community and Common Market made more than 100 recommendations for curbing the proliferation of illicit small arms and called for a renewed regional initiative to deal with small arms and light weapons and other security issues.[16]

C. Activities undertaken by intergovernmental organizations

54. The Council of the League of Arab States adopted, at the level of Foreign Ministers, two important resolutions, in September 2004 and March 2006, by which it approved new frameworks and mechanisms for cooperation among the Arab States in the fight against illicit small arms and light weapons. The Ministers requested the League to establish a regional focal point for small arms and light weapons within the secretariat; to provide technical assistance and training to the Arab States; to organize annual meetings for the national focal points on small arms and light weapons; and to encourage Arab States to nominate national focal points.[17] As a result, the Arab League established a regional focal point on small arms and light weapons and organized its first national focal point meeting in Cairo on 26 and 27 December 2005, to review progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action, to assess the roles of the regional focal points and the national focal points in the Arab League, to review the challenges faced and to consider the best practices of the national focal points. The regional focal point is requested, among other

[15] www.lansa.org/regions/camerica/documents/code-of-conduct-on-arms-transfers-dec05.pdf.

[16] www.gov.tt/news/news_article.asp?id=4244.

[17] See www.un.org/events/smallarms2006/pdf/arms060629arstate-eng.pdf.

things, to hold regular annual meetings for the Arab national focal points and to establish a database on small arms and light weapons.

55. From 17 to 20 October 2005, Commonwealth Law Ministers met in Accra to consider the threats posed by, inter alia, the unregulated transfer and misuse of small arms and light weapons. The participants reaffirmed their concern and called on the Commonwealth secretariat to continue monitoring developments in the field and to prepare a summary of the obligations concerning the transfer and use of small arms and light weapons, to develop model legislative provisions for marking, tracing, brokering and transferring small arms and light weapons; and to work with other organizations in capacity-building.[18]

56. Interpol has focused its support on assisting Member States in implementing the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, adopted in December 2005, especially on facilitating investigations. Interpol has established the Interpol Weapons Electronic Tracing System to enable States to trace weapons more effectively, and is providing States with access to the Canadian Firearms Reference Table.[19]

57. The 114th meeting of the Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union was held in Nairobi, from 7 to 12 May 2006, to adopt a resolution on the role of parliaments in strengthening control over the trade in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition. A total of 118 national parliaments and five regional parliamentary organizations participated in the meeting. The Assembly called upon parliaments to encourage their Governments to reaffirm their commitment to the implementation of the Programme of Action, while focusing on areas where obstacles persist.[20]

58. The International Organization of la Francophonie held a ministerial conference in Winnipeg on 13 and 14 May 2006. The conference focused on several key issues, including human security, conflict prevention, illegal trafficking in small arms and light weapons, the Organization's contribution to peacekeeping operations and the problem of children in armed conflict. A total of 50 member States, of which 20 were represented at the ministerial level, participated in the conference.[21]

59. In October 2005, the Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technology organized an "outreach to industry" seminar for business and Government representatives, to provide a forum for an exchange of views and the sharing of national experiences to strengthen export controls. At its 11th plenary meeting held in December 2005, the Wassenaar Arrangement considered further export control measures and agreed on a number of amendments to the control lists, such as jamming equipment and unmanned aerial vehicles. It also welcomed the participation of Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta and Slovenia in the plenary meeting for the first time, and admitted South Africa as the first African State to join the Arrangement.[22]

[18] See www.thecommonwealth.org.

[19] www.interpol.org/Public/News/2005/UNanni20051104.asp.

[20] www.un.org/events/smallarms2006/pdf/arms060629intparlamun-eng.pdf.

[21] See www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en.

[22] http://www.wassenaar.org/publicdocuments/public131205.html.

V. Conclusion

60. Member States, international and regional organizations and civil society remained committed to implementing the Programme of Action at the national, regional and global levels. Their commitment was demonstrated by a high number of initiatives undertaken by States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and by the many practical projects carried out during the reporting period, often through partnerships.

61. The intensity of the discussions during the 2006 Review Conference and the meetings of the Preparatory Committee and the unanimous confirmation of support for the Programme of Action by States participating in the Conference demonstrated that the international community continues to attach the highest degree of importance to efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The Conference emphasized that significant progress had been made in the implementation of the Programme of Action. It also underlined the fact that Member States had not been able to bridge their differences on a number of key issues that had not been included in the Programme of Action in 2001. The establishment of a Group of Governmental Experts to consider further steps to enhance international cooperation in preventing, combating and eradicating illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons constitutes an important advance in the efforts to tackle the issue of the brokering of small arms and light weapons at the global level.

62. It is worth noting that the Group of Interested States in Practical Disarmament Measures has further expanded its activities to include provision of assistance to non-governmental organizations. This is a step in the right direction, considering that in most developing countries, non-governmental organizations and civil society are often at the forefront in implementing programmes that their national Governments are not able to conduct owing to lack of resources.

63. Most noteworthy, however, is the growing role played by regional, subregional and international organizations in promoting the implementation of the Programme of Action. It is therefore encouraging to note the growing cooperation and collaboration among various members of the Coordinating Action on Small Arms mechanism.